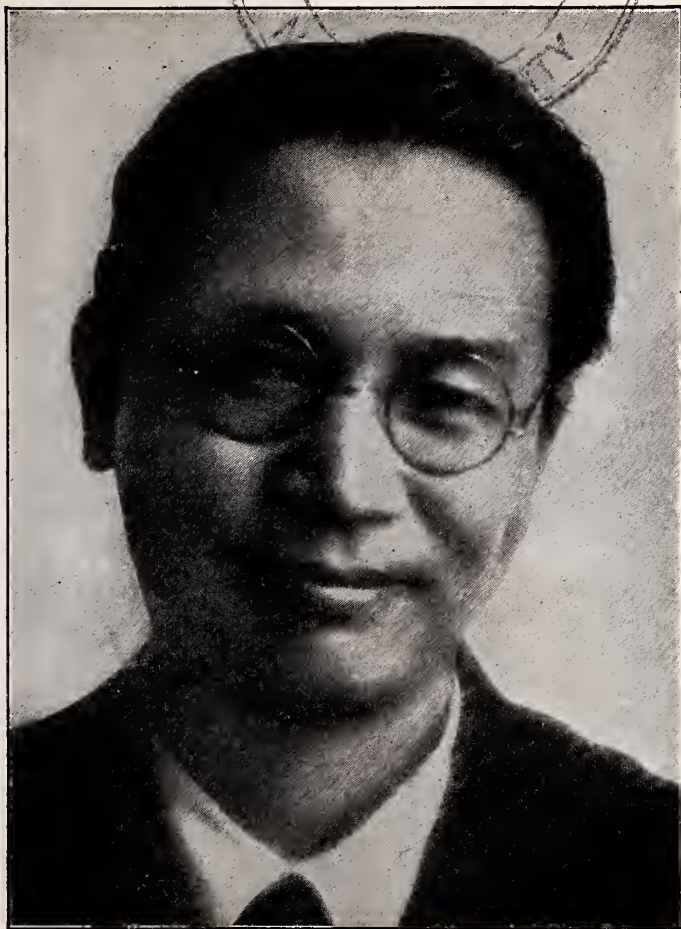


Japan

# "It Is Easy to Preach the Gospel Now in Japan"

By TOYOHICO KAGAWA



Dr. Kagawa is Japan's best-known and beloved Labor Leader, Civic Worker, Novelist, Poet, Evangelist, and Social Prophet

## IT IS EASY TO PREACH THE GOSPEL IN JAPAN NOW

**T**HE Kingdom of God Movement is a movement for the revival of love. We must have a revival of love put in practice, and the Gospel of Christ lived up to and put in the flesh. The Incarnation of Christ must be realized. Today we must visually see the flesh of Christ. Where? In sacred society.

We must thoroughly understand the nature of the Kingdom of God Movement of redemption, redeeming the least, the sinners, the outcasts, and living up to the blood of Jesus Christ. For this movement there are no nations. This movement is the Internationale. There is no division in heaven—no Japan, no America, no Canada in heaven. When we look up to the blue of heaven there are no borderlines.

*How we can reach the evangelized with preaching?*

Right around Tokyo there are many villages and towns not yet reached with the Gospel. For instance, there is Chofu Mura, where water comes from. Four years ago I was asked by that village to send a preacher there and organize a school for Christian purposes. I have had neither money nor preachers to meet this request. At least 90 per cent of the villages and 40 per cent of the towns in Japan have not been reached. We have twelve thousand villages which we are reaching slowly. My wish is that within the next three years we may go into the last one of these villages.

Three thousand villages have no physicians. Doctor Kato was at our meeting at Matsuzawa. He reported that it is astonishing that so many village people have no chance to be examined before they

die, because there are no doctors. The same thing is happening with the Christian Gospel.

### Methods of Village Work

We must reach them systematically. There are many ways in which this can be done. One way is with itinerating visiting evangelists who should be organized chiefly in rural villages. Another way is the Peasant Gospel School, or Farmers' Gospel Institute. There should be five or six workers on the faculty, staying one month here and one month there. They invite twelve or twenty young men from the villages, train them and send them back to their homes. But the best plan is to organize (the natural sequel to this training of leaders in the Farmers' Gospel Institutes) a self-governing club or society for Christ for each village. In my experience it is very difficult to get the villagers interested in mere preaching. But we often have a meeting in some peasant's house, inviting them to study religious education, and organize a self-governing society for Christ, which is continued as an ethical-religious club. This is taken up and extended by the village people.

I wish that many missions could be united in one province to share the work and attempt to reach the last village of Japan. If we could cover the unreached districts within three years, the Kingdom of God

Movement would be a great success.

### Education of Laymen

Another need is the education of lay preachers. From the beginning I lay emphasis upon the need for 5,000 lay preachers. Unless we get these, this Kingdom of God Movement is a failure. As I have been trained in the Proletarian Movement, I have noticed that older persons are not efficient. The young militant organizers are the ones who can reach the last man in the last town and village. We must train the men who are militant, who do not receive pay but stand on the corner of the street, or go out to the villages to preach, returning to their homes in the evening. They can use their summer and other vacations preaching in the fishing villages or mountain districts. We must educate and organize these lay preachers at once. So I wish that the Kingdom of God Movement Central Committee would awaken to this point and mobilize mission schools, to open their dormitories during the summer and invite lay preachers to come for ten days of training. Or night schools could be organized, with a three-months course, three nights a week. As the Sunday Schools have their Federation and educational systems, so lay preachers must have a standing federation, and organization for education.

### A Christian Cooperative Internationale

My prayer is that as the third Epistle of John teaches the love of the brethren, so we may practice it. Unless we practice, there is no use to preach and preach. Reading the history of the Brotherhood Movement in the Christian Church, we find that brotherhood was practiced inside the Catholic Church. But among the Protestants, such movements have gone out of the

church, and we recognize the reappearance of brotherhood movements in the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, etc. I wish in some way we could organize a Brotherhood Movement in the Protestant Church and make it function.

If we could have one and a half million yen\* to invest as a fund in the Cooperative Movement, it could be used for Sick Insurance for Christian brothers and sisters, for starting an Educational Union, for Unemployment Insurance, and for many other needed varieties of Cooperatives. Later this cooperative system could be extended to China, Korea, India, and the population of Africa, as an organized Christian Cooperative Internationale. This would serve as a great advancement to the Kingdom of God Movement.

### A System of Evangelism

We must have a well-woven system of evangelism. One man is a good preacher, another a good teacher, another good for social organization. The three can be connected, and the district evangelized very easily. But if the three kinds of persons be separated, there is too much independence. The preacher with an individual way of preaching, expressing only his own views, is out of date.

### Organized and Successful

Fifty cities and districts in Japan have organized for the Kingdom of God Movement, and meetings have been held during January in the six big cities of Tokyo, Yokohama, Kyoto, Kobe, Nagoya, and Osaka. I was present at all except those of Osaka, and everywhere the various churches cooperated splendidly. We have never known such an unanimous action on the part of the churches.

From June 16, 1928, to February 1, 1930, we have held meetings

\* About \$750,000.



from the northernmost part of Japan to the southernmost island, attended by 302,777 people, 20,918 of whom signed cards to become disciples of Christ. *It is very easy to preach the gospel in Japan now. All the villages and towns and cities are open to us. Probably nowhere else in the world is there such a ripe field for Christ at present.*

### Laborers Turn to Christ

Since the great Left Wing suppression of February, 1928, the laborers have gradually settled to more moderate ideas. Many of them have begun to think about the truth of Christ. Two of my friends, presidents of Peasants' Unions, have received baptism, one in Uwajima, and one in Himeji. This shows how the independent thinking class of Japan is inclining more toward the truth of the Gospel. All of these farmers have once received the baptism of Karl Marx, but through fighting more for the social cause, and through penetrating more deeply into experience, they have found the truth of the Cross. Please remember us in your prayers, because this is our critical period to capture Japan for Christ.

Japan is waiting for Christ, and Christ will win in Japan. The

Christianization of Japan means the Christianization of the Orient. It will radiate to China, to Korea, and to India.

### The Standard of the Movement

I take Christ's Manifesto in the Nazareth synagogue as the standard of the Kingdom of God Movement: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives; and recovering the sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* (Luke 4: 18-19.)

We are working for those five points: Economic, psychological, social, physical, and political emancipation. The Gospel of Christ reaches every point in human living. The love of Christ reaches through to uplift the heart of every man toward God. So I want to carry the Gospel of Christ into ordinary living. I know that Christ is the Master, the Individual God, because He gave us Love, and Love is Eternal, Love is all-sufficient. I take the Gospel of Christ as the Cross of Blood, the Prayer of Love, the Adventure of Love, the Victory of Love.

The Methodist Episcopal Church is cooperating in the Kingdom of God Movement. An increase of World Service funds, given to the Board of Foreign Missions, will encourage and strengthen this evangelistic movement.

**Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church**

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